

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 SCI-06 SAJ-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5989

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 803

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RO, UR, FR, PL

SUBJECT: ROMANIAN PROBLEMS WITH THE USSR

REF: (A) MOSCOW 5361; (B) PARIS 25564; (C) PARIS 31392

1. SUMMARY. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF JAN 10, ROMANIAN EMBASSY COUNSELLOR BOZHIANU STRESSED CONTINUED TENSIONS WITH SOVIETS AND CLAIMED THIS HAD INHIBITING EFFECT ON ROMANIAN RELATIONS WITH FRANCE AND POLAND. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH BOZHIANU SAID HE HAD NO INFORMATION ON ROMANIAN-SOVIET SCRAPE REPORTED REFTEL A, HE SAID BREZHNEV HAD SUBJECTED ROMANIA TO STRONG CRITICISM AT PRIVATE MEETING WITH SOVIET LEADERS ON DEC 21 OR 22, JUST AFTER THE CONFERENCE OF COMMUNIST PARTY SECRETARIES IN MOSCOW. HE WAS ALSO CONCERNED OVER PONOMAREV JAN 7 SPEECH IN PRAGUE AS POSSIBLE EVIDENCE OF HARDENING IN SOVIET LINE, AND APPREHENSIVE OVER SOVIET PUSH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CONFERENCE, WHICH HE SAID ROMANIANS WOULD CONTINUE TO OPPOSE BECAUSE OF ANTI-CHINESE THRUST. WHEN EMBOFF ASKED WHETHER SOVIET-ROMANIAN TENSIONS MIGHT HAVE CAUSED CEAUDESCU'S
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EARLY RETURN FROM THE U.S., BOZHIANU SAID HE DOUBTED THIS,

SINCE SOVIET-ROMANIAN RELATIONS WERE CONSISTENTLY BAD.

3. DURING THE CONVERSATION, BOZHIANU TRIED TO SHOW HOW ROMANIAN-SOVIET STRAINS HAD BANEFUL EFFECT ON ROMANIAN RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. HE CLAIMED THAT WHEN QUAI SECRETARY GENERAL DE COURCEL RECENTLY INFORMED THE ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR THAT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU WOULD DEFINITELY NOT BE ABLE TO VISIT BUCHAREST DURING FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1974 (REFTEL B), DE COURCEL SAID BLUNTLY THAT THE FRENCH HAD "TO PAY ATTENTION TO RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS". IN GENERAL DISCUSSION OF DETENTE POLICY, BOZHIANU SAW BASIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FRENCH AND U.S. APPROACH, IN THAT FRENCH STRESSED ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DETENTE WHILE WE USED POLITICS AS POINT OF DEPARTURE. AS EXAMPLE, HE CITED JOINT STATEMENT SIGNED DURING CEAUSESCU'S VISIT TO U.S., WHICH WAS FAR MORE HELPFUL RESPONSE TO BASIC ROMANIAN SECURITY PROBLEMS THAN ANYTHING FRANCE HAD EVER OFFERED. CLEAR IMPLICATION WAS THAT FRENCH WERE TREADING SOFTLY IN POLITICAL FIELD WITH ROMANIANS SO AS NOT TO OFFEND SOVIETS.

4. BOZHIANU NOTED THAT FRENCH ECONOMIC AND FINANCE MINISTER GISCARD D'ESTAING DUE TO VISIT BUCHAREST AT END OF FEBRUARY TO SIGN TEN-YEAR AGREEMENT ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EXCHANGE AS WELL AS TAX AGREEMENT. FRENCH MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT CHARBONNEL ALSO SCHEDULED TO GO TO BUCHAREST THIS SPRING, WHILE ROMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HOPES TO COME TO PARIS EITHER IN FEBRUARY OR APRIL.

5. IN DISCUSSING ROMANIAAN-POLISH RELATIONS, BOZHIANU AGAIN ALLUDED TO INHIBITIONS CAUSED BY SOVIET DISAPPROVAL OF ROMANIAN POLICY. HE SAID GIEREK WAS ONLY EAST EUROPEAN LEADER WHO HAD NOT VISITED ROMANIA SINCE BREZHNEV CAME TO POWER AND ROMANIANS HAD BEEN TRYING FOR SOME TIME TO PURSUADE HIM TO COME. HOWEVER, GIEREK HAD CONSISTENTLY REFUSED, EXPLAINING FRANKLY THAT HE FEARED THE SOVIET REACTION. DURING ROMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MACOVESCU'S VISIT TO WARSAW LAST YEAR THE POLES HAD STUTLY RESISTED ALL ATTEMPTS TO SOFTEN THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE.

6. BOZHIANU ASKED EMBOFF WHETHER HE HAD ANY INFORMATION ON POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET RAPPROACHMENT WITH ALBANIA, TO WHICH
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EMBOFF REPLIED IN NEGATIVE. BOZHIANU THEN SAID HE HAD RECENTLY HAD TALK WITH ALBANIAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS HERE WHO TOOK LINE THAT THEY WERE NOT IN THE LEAST INTERESTED IN BETTER RELATIONS WITH EITHER THE SOVIET UNION OR THE U.S.

7. COMMENT: BOZHIANU'S PRIMARY CONCERN IS CLEARLY THE SOVIET UNION -- BOTH THE DIRECT THREAT IT POSES TO ROMANIA'S SECURITY AND THE INHIBITING EFFECT HE BELIEVES IT EXERTS ON ROMANIA'S

FOREIGN RELATIONS. CEAUCESCU'S VISIT TO THE U.S. STANDS OUT
AS A MAJOR ACHIEVEMENT COUNTERBALANCING THESE FACTORS IN
BOZHIANU'S EYES, AND HE TOOK PAINS TO STRESS ITS IMPORTANCE TO
THE ROMANIANS. WE BELIEVE BOZHIANU'S VIEWS ON FRENCH WORRIES
OVER SOVIET SENSITIVITIES ARE EXAGGERATED, AND INDEED THAT
DE COURCEL'S REMARK MAY HAVE BEEN MISINTERPRETED, GIVEN CONTINUED
FRNCH - SOVIET CONTACTS WITH ROMANIA, EVEN IN THE MILITARY FIELD
(REFTEL C). IN ANY CASE, IT SEEMS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT, IN
CONTRAST TO THE FRENCH, BOZHIANU SHOWS NO APPREHENSION OVER
U.S. DETENE POLICY OR RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS, INTERPRETING
OUR POLICY INSTEAD AS ONE OF BALANCE AND CONCERN FOR THE
INTERESTS AND CONTINUED INDEPENDENCE OF SMALLER COUNTRIES SUCH
AS ROMANIA. GDS
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